

# MORNINGENERGY

BY KELSEY TAMBORRINO

Presented by Chevron

## Message

**From:** POLITICO's Morning Energy  
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**Sent:** 6/7/2019 2:04:19 PM  
**To:** Baptist, Erik  
[Baptist.Erik@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** All aboard the minibus —  
Automakers call emissions rule  
freeze 'untenable' — Green  
New Deal gains union backer

*With help from Alex Guillén and Anthony Adragna*

*Editor's Note: This edition of Morning Energy is published weekdays at 10 a.m. POLITICO Pro Energy subscribers hold exclusive early access to the newsletter each morning at 6 a.m. To learn more about POLITICO Pro's comprehensive policy intelligence coverage, policy tools and services, click [here](#).*

## QUICK FIX

— **Amendments will roll in this morning** for the five-measure House minibus that includes Energy-Water spending.

— **A coalition of major automakers are urging the president** against moving forward with the administration's current plan to freeze auto emissions standards, warning it could prove "untenable."

— **The SEIU became the first major U.S. labor union** to back the Green New Deal on Thursday, a shift from other labor groups that have been apprehensive about the ambitious measure.

A message from Chevron:

Chevron's investment of \$43B in U.S. projects over the past 5 years helped benefit small business, support jobs, and boost local economies. [Learn more.](#)

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**IT'S FINALLY FRIDAY!** I'm your host, Kelsey Tamborrino. Cheniere's Khary Cauthen is back with the trivia win. He was first to name Thomas Porteous, a district judge from the Eastern District of Louisiana who was the most recent person to be impeached by the House. For today: How many *jockeys* have ever won the Triple Crown? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to [ktamborrino@politico.com](mailto:ktamborrino@politico.com).

#### DRIVING THE DAY

**ALL ABOARD THE MINIBUS:** Amendments to the House's five-measure minibus are due this morning, and the package is expected to [hit the floor next week](#), with the aim of final passage the week of June 17.

**Dozens, if not hundreds, of amendments** are expected to be filed today before the 10 a.m. cutoff for lawmakers to submit changes to the bill, [H.R. 2740 \(116\)](#), Pro's Caitlin Emma and Jennifer Scholtes [report](#).

**Amendments to the Energy-Water portion were trickling in last night**, including a [bipartisan amendment](#) from Rep. [Tim Walberg](#) to increase funding for DOE's office of cybersecurity, energy security, and emergency response and [one](#) from Democratic Rep. [Brendan Boyle](#) that would prevent any funds to be used to reject a grant due to the use of the terms "global warming" or "climate change."

**Other amendments include [one](#)** from GOP Rep. [Kevin Hern](#) that would prohibit any funds in the measure from being used toward a carbon tax; [another](#) from Democratic Rep. [Mike Levin](#) calling for FERC to finalize its rulemaking on aggregated distributed energy resource participation in wholesale energy markets; and [various Republican amendments](#) to allow a border wall along the southern border.

**AUTOS: EMISSIONS PLAN 'UNTENABLE':** Seventeen major automakers urged President Donald Trump in a letter Thursday to moderate his administration's plan to freeze auto emissions standards and avoid a clash with California over rules designed to promote more efficient vehicles, Pro's Alex Guillén reports.

**"For our companies,** a broadly supported final rule would provide regulatory certainty and enhance our ability to invest and innovate by avoiding an extended period of litigation and instability, which could prove as untenable as the current program," they wrote in a letter, which marks their most concerted criticism to date of the administration's plan. Instead, the automakers ask Trump to maintain a unified national emissions standard that continues to increase efficiency and adoption of electric vehicles.

**UNION FIRST TO BACK GREEN NEW DEAL:** The Service Employees International Union executive board passed a resolution Thursday in support of the Green New Deal — making it the first major U.S. union to do so. The resolution says the Green New Deal aligns with SEIU's values and "presents an unprecedented opportunity to unite the fights for environmental, racial, and economic justice."

**The union's support of the climate measure marks a departure** from other labor groups across the nation. POLITICO reported earlier this week on Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's "Green New Deal LA" plan and other similar efforts that were denounced as a betrayal from California labor union members. That follows April remarks by Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, who said the labor federation couldn't back the Green New Deal resolution in its current form.

**BLOOMBERG PUTS \$500M TOWARD COAL CLOSURES:** Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg will announce today a \$500 million investment to the new "Beyond Carbon" campaign, Bloomberg Philanthropies said this morning. The Beyond Carbon effort follows the "Beyond Coal" campaign started in 2011 by Bloomberg and the Sierra Club with the goal of closing one-third of U.S. coal plants. The

new effort aims to close the rest by 2030 and stop the further growth of gas plants. The foundation is touting it "as the largest coordinated campaign to tackle climate change ever undertaken" in the U.S.

**MOOT POINT:** The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit last night dismissed the lawsuit that had held up construction of the Keystone XL pipeline after concluding the matter is moot because of the new presidential permit issued in March by Trump. The dismissal had been widely expected following Trump's new permit. A lower court judge had blocked construction after ordering the State Department to redo its environmental analysis of the pipeline, a move the company said means it will miss this year's construction season.

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#### AROUND THE AGENCIES

**EPA WATCHDOG 'OFFICIALLY' CLOSES PRUITT PROBE:** EPA's inspector general told lawmakers it has formally closed an inconclusive investigation into allegations that former Administrator Scott Pruitt misused his position for personal gain, including Pruitt's efforts to obtain a Chick-fil-A franchise and other work for his wife.

**Investigators talked to witnesses,** reviewed records and worked with the independent Office of Government Ethics, but the [OIG revealed](#) last fall that Pruitt's July resignation stymied that and other probes since it left investigators unable to interview him. In a [letter](#) this week, [OIG confirmed](#) the probe is "officially closed." In a

statement, Sens. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Tom Carper (D-Del.) complained that Pruitt has been "virtually let off the hook from being held accountable."

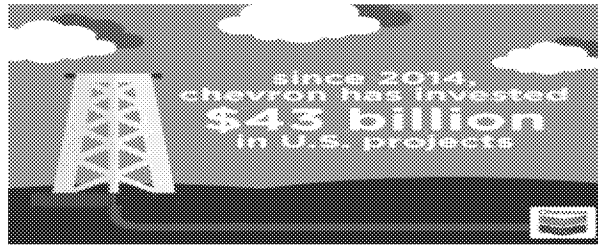
**Most inspectors general, including EPA's**, don't have the authority to subpoena testimony from former federal employees. Federal IGs and watchdog nonprofits have complained for years that being handcuffed like that means the subject of an investigation can stymie it simply by resigning or retiring.

**EPA SWITCHES CAREER OFFICIALS RUNNING AUTO, CLIMATE OFFICES:** Chris Grundler, the career official who heads the EPA office that oversees vehicle emissions and the Renewable Fuel Standard, will switch jobs with the head of another division that works on climate change as well as programs on acid rain and the ozone layer, Reuters reported last night. Grundler on Aug. 4 will leave the Office of Transportation and Air Quality to switch jobs with the head of the Office of Atmospheric Programs, Sarah Dunham, another career official.

**As the head of OTAQ, Grundler has played** a significant role in developing the auto emissions rollback the Trump administration is expected to roll out later this month. In a staff memo, EPA air chief Bill Wehrum wrote that the swap gives Grundler and Dunham "a new opportunity for learning and leadership" and "fresh and different perspectives to these critical organizations." Grundler declined to comment to Reuters on his move.

**At least one environmentalist**, John Walke of the NRDC, criticized Grundler's move to OAP, writing on Twitter that Wehrum is "exiling him to the office responsible for climate change--the Trump EPA equivalent of Soviet Siberia."

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## ON THE HILL

**MANCHIN EXPLAINS:** Sen. Joe Manchin, ranking member of the Energy Committee, explained in a statement to ME why he is the lone member of the Democratic caucus who did not back legislation barring the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris climate accord. "I have never believed the Paris Agreement created a level playing field amongst nations — particularly when it comes to unifying all major emitters around the same goals," the West Virginia Democrat said in the statement.

**Manchin called climate change "an urgent threat"** and said he is "focused on developing bipartisan proposals that allow for U.S. leadership on climate science and technology."

**NATURAL RESOURCES LAUNCHES BIPARTISAN PROBE:** House Natural Resources Chairman Raúl Grijalva and ranking member Rob Bishop are requesting a briefing from Interior to learn more about allegations the World Wildlife Fund and other organizations supported by the U.S. government may have "played a role in funding and equipping forces abroad that have committed a range of human rights violations."

**The bipartisan request to Secretary David Bernhardt** follows a BuzzFeed report detailing World Wide Fund for Nature funding of anti-poaching forces who tortured and killed indigenous people. "Despite the importance of protecting wildlife and endangered species from extinction, the United States must not be party to violations of basic rights," Grijalva and Bishop wrote in the letter. The lawmakers request Interior provide a briefing on international conservation grants by the department.

**IN THE FIELD:** House Oversight Environment Subcommittee Chairman [Harley Rouda](#) will lead a [field hearing](#) today on nuclear waste management and storage in Laguna Niguel, Calif. — not far from the San Onofre nuclear plant that was recently [given the OK](#) to resume dry storage operations.

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**Sick and tired of traffic?** Relief may not be as far off as you think. [POLITICO Magazine's "What Works" series](#) looks at innovative ways that cities are trying to reduce traffic, from [density-focused light rail](#) to [congestion pricing](#) to an outright [car ban](#) on the busiest streets. If you could change anything to reduce congestion or improve transportation in your city, what would it be? [Tell us here](#) and we'll publish the most thoughtful responses.

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#### THE GRID

— "California's largest wildfire was caused by a hammer, Cal Fire says," [Fresno Bee](#).

— "Coal miners' union urges silica regulation to curb black lung," [Reuters](#).

— "White House might make federal scientists debate skeptics," [E&E News](#).

— "EPA criticized for handling of Coakley landfill contamination," [Seacoast Online](#).

— "Another Justice coal company steps in to pay \$1.2M sanction for smaller company," [S&P Global Market Intelligence](#).

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